CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.      A method of searching a plurality of content repositories, comprising:

provviding for the representation of the plurality of content repositories as a virtual content repository (VCR);

searching the VCR for information that satisfies a search expression;

providing search results; and

wherein the VCR includes a common content model and namespace.

2.      The method of claim 1 wherein:

each one of the plurality of content repositories implements a service provider interface (SPI) compatible with the VCR.

3.      The method of claim 1 wherein searching the VCR includes:

searching each of the plurality of content repositories.

4.      The method of claim 1 wherein:

the search expression can include at least one of: a logical expression, a Boolean operator, a nested expression, an object name, a function/method call, a mathematical function, a mathematical operator, a string operator, an image operator, and Structured Query Language (SQL).

5.      The method of claim 1 wherein providing search results includes:

combining the results of searching each one of the plurality of content repositories.

6.      The method of claim 1 wherein providing search results includes:

caching the search results.

7.      The method of claim 1 wherein providing for the representation of the plurality of content repositories as a VCR includes:

extending the content model to include information in the plurality of content repositories; and

wherein the namespace spans the plurality of content repositories.

8.     The method of claim 7 wherein:

the content model provides a uniform representation of content for the plurality of content repositories.

9.     The method of claim 1 wherein:

the VCR includes a set of content information and a set of schema information.

10.     The method of claim 9 wherein searching the VCR for information includes:

searching the set of content information and the set of schema information.

11.     A method of searching a plurality of content repositories, comprising:

providing for the representation of the plurality of content repositories as a virtual content repository (VCR);

searching the VCR for information that satisfies a search expression;

providing search results; and

wherein each one of the plurality of content repositories implements a service provider interface (SPI) compatible with the VCR.

12.     The method of claim 11 wherein searching the VCR includes:

searching each of the plurality of content repositories.

13.     The method of claim 11 wherein:

the search expression can include at least one of: a logical expression, a Boolean operator, a nested expression, an object name, a function/method call, a mathematical function, a mathematical operator, a string operator, an image operator, and Structured Query Language (SQL).

14.     The method of claim 11 wherein providing search results includes:

combining the results of searching each one of the plurality of content repositories.

15.     The method of claim 11 wherein providing search results includes:

caching the search results.

16. The method of claim 11 wherein providing for the representation of the plurality of content repositories as a VCR includes:

extending a VCR content model to include information in the plurality of content repositories; and

providing a hierarchical namespace spanning the plurality of content repositories.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein:

the content model provides a uniform representation of content for the plurality of content repositories.

18. The method of claim 11 wherein:

the VCR includes a set of content information and a set of schema information.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein searching the VCR for information includes:

searching the set of content information and the set of schema information.

20. A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon that when executed by a processor cause a system to:

provide for the representation of a plurality of content repositories as a virtual content repository (VCR);

search the VCR for information that satisfies a search expression;

provide search results; and

wherein each one of the plurality of content repositories implements a service provider interface (SPI) compatible with the VCR.

21. The machine readable medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:

search each of the plurality of content repositories.

22. The machine readable medium of claim 20 wherein:

the search expression can include at least one of: a logical expression, a Boolean operator, a nested expression, an object name, a function/method call, a mathematical function, a mathematical operator, a string operator, an image operator, and Structured Query Language (SQL).

23.     The machine readable medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:

combine the results of searching each one of the plurality of content repositories.

24.     The machine readable medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:

cache the search results.

25.     The machine readable medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:

extend a VCR content model to include information in the plurality of content repositories; and

provide a hierarchical namespace spanning the plurality of content repositories.

26.     The machine readable medium of claim 25 wherein:

the content model provides a uniform representation of content for the plurality of content repositories.

27.     The method of claim 20 wherein:

the VCR includes a set of content information and a set of schema information.

28.     The machine readable medium of claim 27, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:

search the set of content information and the set of schema information.

29.     A computer data signal embodied in a transmission medium, comprising:

a code segment including instructions to provide for the representation of a plurality of content repositories as a virtual content repository (VCR);

a code segment including instructions to search the VCR for information that satisfies a search expression;

a code segment including instructions to provide search results; and

wherein each one of the plurality of content repositories implements a service provider interface (SPI) compatible with the VCR.

30. The computer data signal of claim 29, further comprising:

a code segment including instructions to search each of the plurality of content repositories.

31. The computer data signal of claim 29 wherein:

the search expression can include at least one of: a logical expression, a Boolean operator, a nested expression, an object name, a function/method call, a mathematical function, a mathematical operator, a string operator, an image operator, and Structured Query Language (SQL).

32. The computer data signal of claim 29, further comprising:

a code segment including instructions to combine the results of searching each one of the plurality of content repositories.

33. The computer data signal of claim 29, further comprising:

a code segment including instructions to cache the search results.

34. The computer data signal of claim 29, further comprising:

a code segment including instructions to extend a VCR content model to include information in the plurality of content repositories; and

a code segment including instructions to provide a hierarchical namespace spanning the plurality of content repositories.

35. The computer data signal of claim 34 wherein:

the content model provides a uniform representation of content for the plurality of content repositories.

36.     The computer data signal of claim 29 wherein:

the VCR includes a set of content information and a set of schema information.

37.     The computer data signal of claim 29, further comprising:

a code segment including instructions to search the set of content information and the set of schema information.